

# Narrative Medicine: Reading, Writing, and Reflecting in Clinical Practice, Teaching, and Self-Care

## Program Overview

Narrative medicine, both in medical practice and education, is practiced with a focus on the skills of communication and collaboration which are essential to positive health outcomes. Learning how to write and reflect more expertly gives practitioners a powerful skill with which to build therapeutic and collegial relationships, improve patient outcomes, and live and work in a more reflective and engaged way. This program is designed for healthcare practitioners looking to inform their professional practice with narrative approaches to health and medicine, and those seeking to explore creative and reflective writing for their own sake.

This program will introduce the theory and practice of Narrative Medicine through a variety of practical activities and discussion. Participants will be guided through in-class exercises in close reading, close listening, and creative and reflective writing. Sessions will include an ongoing discussion on the ways that healthcare practice can be informed by narrative medicine and the relationship between the creative and healing arts, as well as the ethical questions raised by narratively-informed approaches.

More advanced elements of the art of writing will be introduced as the course proceeds. Participants will read a selection of short literary works and discuss what they offer as models, and the course will offer opportunities for participants to share their own work, enhancing their comfort with expression, communication, and feedback. Guest speakers will offer theoretical, practical and creative perspectives on additional genres, such as poetry and non-fiction.

This new program consists of seven 2.5-hour sessions and **will require in-between-session homework and reading.**

Registration is now open. There is an associated **registration fee of \$700**. A maximum of **17** participants will be accepted into the program on a first come-first serve basis. The program will run if a minimum of 10 participants is met.

Please register at: <https://cfid.utoronto.ca/fostering>

## Target audience

Healthcare clinicians and educators with no experience or limited experience in

- narrative medicine
- reflective writing
- creative writing

## Learning goals

- learning introductory theory and concepts of narrative medicine through lecture, reading and discussion
- developing skills in narrative-based medicine through practical exercises in observation, attention, close reading, close listening, and in-class reflective writing related to clinical experiences
- discussing and developing ways to integrate narrative medicine techniques into daily clinical practice and teaching where relevant
- deepening craft of both reflective and creative writing through writing exercises (in-class and take-home) as well as lecture and discussion
- advancing close reading skills via discussion of primarily health-related published works in a variety of genres
- developing skills of respectful response and helpful editing and commentary by sharing and responding to participant work

## Lead Facilitator

Damian Tarnopolsky has taught courses in Narrative Medicine at the Centre for Faculty Development for several years, and led writing and reflection workshops for medical students and residents as the Barbara Moon Fellow at Massey College from 2016-19. He is the author of two books: the novel *Goya's Dog*, a finalist for the Commonwealth Writers' Prize and the Amazon.ca First Novel Award, and the short fiction collection *Lanzmann and Other Stories*, which was nominated for the ReLit Award. His play *The Defence* won the 2019 Voaden Prize. He earned his Ph.D. at the University of Toronto and has taught writing and literature at the School of Continuing Studies, where he was recently nominated for an Excellence in Teaching award, and Humber College. A frequent contributor of essays and reviews to Canadian publications, he is also the proprietor of Slingsby and Dixon, an editorial services company in Toronto.

## Schedule and Location (7 sessions, 2.5 hours each)

Each session will be held in at the Li Ka Shing International Healthcare Education Centre of St. Michael's Hospital located at 209 Victoria Street, Toronto.

Please arrive for **5:45pm**, as the main doors of 209 Victoria Street lock at 6pm.

### Spring 2020

Session 1	Thursday, March 12, 2020	6pm-8:30pm	LKS 240
Session 2	Thursday, March 26, 2020	6pm-8:30pm	LKS 240
Session 3	Thursday, <b>April 2, 2020*</b>	6pm-8:30pm	LKS 136
Session 4	Thursday, April 16, 2020	6pm-8:30pm	LKS 241
Session 5	Thursday, April 30, 2020	6pm-8:30pm	LKS 240
Session 6	Thursday, May 14, 2020	6pm-8:30pm	LKS 211
Session 7	Thursday, May 28, 2020	6pm-8:30pm	LKS 211

\*Most sessions are bi-weekly, but **the third session is only 1 week after** the second session. We have done our best to avoid holidays (spring break; Passover; Easter; Ramadan; Eid) and apologize for any conflicts.

## Attendance Policy

We are asking registrants to ensure they **can attend at least 6 out of 7 sessions**, since the program is short with only 7 total sessions and missing more may impact the learning experience.

If you cannot attend at least 6 sessions, please email Farah ([Farah.Friesen@unityhealth.to](mailto:Farah.Friesen@unityhealth.to)). A separate waitlist kept for those who cannot attend at least 6 sessions.

If we do not have the maximum number of registrants, the waitlisted people will be added to the program with the understanding that they can attend less than 6 sessions, but we are giving registration precedence to those who can commit more fully. We instituted a similar attendance policy in our previous offerings and found that this helped group cohesion and comfort.

## Additional Information

This is not a formally accredited program but it is a group learning activity as defined by the Maintenance of Certification Programs of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada and of the College of Family Physicians of Canada.

## Questions?

Please contact:

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